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Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly: United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa

Letter dated 5 July 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the final recommendations of the Consultative Mechanism for the Reorganization of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, which Senegal has had the pleasure of chairing (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 99 (c)

(*Signed*) Paul **Badji**
Ambassador

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Consultative Mechanism for the Reorganization of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa

[Original: English]

Recommendations for the reorganization of the Centre

(Adopted on 12 June)

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa was established on 1 January 1986, on the basis of General Assembly resolution 40/151G of 16 December 1985, to provide, upon request, substantive support for initiatives and other efforts of member States of the African region towards the realization of measures for peace, arms limitation and disarmament in the region, in cooperation with the former Organization of African Unity (current African Union), as well as to coordinate the implementation of regional activities in Africa under the world disarmament campaign.

2. As noted in the resolution setting up the Consultative Mechanism, the Centre has been operating under strenuous financial difficulties resulting from substantial reduction in extrabudgetary funding.

3. Therefore, the Centre needs to be reorganized to ensure that it is equipped to effectively fulfil its mandate. In this regard, the proposal set out below is made.

II. Structure

4. The following structure is recommended, with the three additional posts under subparagraphs (b), (c) and (d) to be funded by the United Nations regular budget:

(a) Director (1);

(b) Political Affairs Officer (1);

(c) Administrative Assistant (1);

(d) Librarian (1).

III. Mandate of the Centre

5. The mandate of the Centre, as stated in General Assembly resolution 40/151 G, remains valid.

6. However, taking into account the scarcity of financial resources, it appears that the Centre should focus its actions on the aspects of its mandate which are considered to be a priority for African States, as well as for the international community.

IV. Work programme

7. Taking note of the Centre's existing mandate of providing, upon request, substantive support for initiatives and other efforts of Member States of the African region towards the realization of measures of peace, arms limitation and disarmament in the region, in cooperation with the African Union, the following priority programme is recommended for 2008-2009:

7.1 Promotion and implementation in Africa of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Centre could organize, in cooperation with the African Union and other international and subregional organizations in Africa, regional seminars and workshops annually on specific aspects of the Programme of Action, particularly to address specific capacity-building and assistance requests from African States.

7.2 Design, in cooperation with regional and other international organizations, projects for implementing priority recommendations of the United Nations on the consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures. The Centre could be involved in the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission, including in the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, specifically with respect to the collection, storage and destruction of weapons.

7.3 Assist African States, upon their request, in strengthening their capacity to implement international legal instruments to which they are parties in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as relevant United Nations resolutions.

7.4 Cooperate, as appropriate, with the African Union, other international and regional organizations and donors, and civil society, in promoting and supporting peace initiatives and the culture of peace in Africa, including the African Security Sector Reform Programme.

7.5 Assist African States, upon request, in their efforts to prevent the dumping of nuclear, radioactive, chemical and other hazardous waste in Africa.

7.6. Establish a link with the International Atomic Energy Agency with respect to its activities in Africa, in coordination with AFRAC, and enhance cooperation with other relevant international organizations, such as the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

V. Funding

8. The following recommendations are proposed:

8.1 The Secretariat should prepare, as soon as possible, a draft budget for the period 2008-2009, based on the reorganization proposals contained in the present paper.

8.2 Thereafter, as a matter of priority, the Secretary-General of the United Nations should send a letter to all Member States, appealing for voluntary contributions to a special fund (amount to be determined as soon as the draft budget is ready) to supplement the operations and activities of the Centre.

8.3 The African Union should establish a similar special fund with a specific amount to supplement other sources of funding for the operation of the Centre.

8.4 Discussions should be continued with the Government of Togo regarding its own financial contribution to, and future plans for, the Centre.